Canadian Centre for Ethnomusicology

World Music Concert

The Texture and the Weave: Songs in Times of Struggle

Thursday, March 22, 2007
at 8:00 pm

Convocation Hall

Arts Building
University of Alberta

Department of Music
University of Alberta

Program

The Texture and the Weave: Songs in Times of Struggle

A live folk music documentary that contemplates the persistence of technological change and war from the point of view of the people that live it.

LIVE:
Ann Vriend
Trevor Tchir
David Shepherd
Leah Pessoa
Paul Morgan Donald
Daniel Benjamin Buxton
DOCUMENTARY:
Michael MacDonald

A celebration of the William Sarjeant recording and instrument collections

William Antony Swithin (Bill) Sarjeant
(1935-2002)

The most obvious question, the one I will try to answer for you, is how we come to know the voice of our narrator tonight. Bill Sarjeant was a renowned English trained geologist who took a position at the University of Saskatchewan in 1972. Bill amassed one of the largest private collections of geological literature in the world, was an avid collector of folk songs and instruments, produced radio shows, and donated these shows and his instruments to the *folkwaysAlive!* here at the University of Alberta. With this information and a good imagination you should be able to piece the rest together but these are just details and I'm sure you would prefer a good story.

Bill's long time friend Dave Spalding remembers: " In 1956, as Sarjeant entered graduate school, I arrived in the same department as an undergraduate...and a small repertoire of American folk songs from white and black traditions, picked up from distant rumours of the American folk revival". Dave fondly recalled bringing his guitar on field trips that he and Sarjeant went on as geologists, sharing as many songs as stones. From this seed these songs bloomed into a life time of interest and of searching.

The revival reached British shores and Bill became involved in the Nottingham Folk Workshop. He developed an interest in *a capella* singing and photographing butterflies. Sarjeant was busy working as a geologist, founding the Peake District Mines Historical Society, and attending the early Keele folk festival which introduced many traditional singers alongside contemporary folksingers.

It certainly seems that Bill Sarjeant was a collector, not just of material stuff, but also of experiences. His interest in folk music goes beyond the dates of a performance. It goes beyond the song and digs into the life of the music, the soil from which it may have sprung. In this Sarjeant is a geologist of folk music. He has scoured the landscape of folk recordings and has extracted, from one seam and then another, human history that had become fossilized in sound. Like a scene from a science fiction novel he brought those fossils to life and gave them space so their voice could be heard.

So here we are nearly thirty years after his *Folk Song Sampler* (1978-1979) was first aired in Saskatchewan and Sarjeant has become part of the collections that he cherished. The voice that you are about to hear is the voice of a passionate collector and sharer of songs and the histories that shaped the song as it shaped us. But most of all Bill Sarjeant's voice is a real human voice that cared to tell real human stories of love, hate, joy, sadness, triumph, and loss. These are the real stories of life.

Upcoming World Music Concerts

Join us!

The University of Alberta
Department of Music
and the Canadian Centre
for Ethnomusicology

present

Friday, March 23, 2007
at 8:00 pm
Indian Music Ensemble
Sharmila Mathur, Director

Saturday, March 24, 2007
at 8:00 pm
West African Music Ensemble
Robert Kpogo, Director
with guests
Wajjo Drummers, steel pan,
Olga Dominguez (Haitian voodoo dance)
accompanied by
Flavio Rojas, Wajjo Drummers

Admission: $15/stud/sen, $20/adult
For ticket information, please contact the Department of Music,
Fine Arts Building 3-82, telephone: 492-0601